

Application No. 09/576,223
Reply to Office Action of October 6, 2005

Docket No.: 20140-00238-US

REMARKS

Claims 1-11, 13-15 and 18-21 are pending in the application. Claims 8, 14 and 18 have been amended and claims 12, 16 and 17 have been canceled by way of the present amendment. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the outstanding Office Action, claims 8-10, 13-15 and 18-21 were objected to due to informalities; claims 16-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 101; claims 16 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,553,143 (Ross et al.); claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,067,531 (Hoyt et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,930,357 (Fukui); and claims 1-11, 13-15 and 18-21 were allowed.

Claim Objections

Claims 8-10, 13-15 and 18-21 were objected to due to informalities. In response to the rejection, claims 8, 14 and 18 have been amended to clarify the invention by correcting typographical errors in the claims as indicated in the outstanding Office Action. Applicants respectfully submit the new claims raise no question of new matter and overcome the informalities indicated in the outstanding Office Action. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the claim objections be withdrawn.

101 Rejections

Claims 16-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 101. Since claims 18-21 have been indicated as allowed, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 16-17 were meant to be rejected under this section. Clarification is respectfully requested. In response to the intended rejection, claims 16 and 17 have been canceled by way of the present amendment. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the outstanding rejection is moot.

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102 and 103 Rejections

Claims 16 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 102(b) as being anticipated by Ross et al. Claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoyt et al. in view of Fukui. Claims 12, 16 and 17 have been canceled by way of the present amendment. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the outstanding rejection is moot.

Allowed Subject Matter

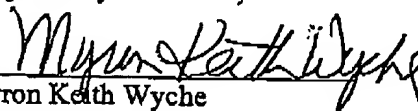
Applicants would like to thank Examiner Revak for the early indication of allowed subject matter. In particular, claims 1-11, 13-15 and 18-21 were allowed. Since claims 12, 16 and 17 were canceled and the remaining outstanding issues addressed by way of the present amendment, it is respectfully submitted that the case is in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance. Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 50-0510, under Order No. 20140-00238-US from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: January 6, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

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